

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

enabling one or more participants to access online general ledger data, source data, and at least one reconciliation item used to reconcile balance discrepancies between the ledger data and the source data; and

facilitating online reconciliation of the reconciliation item by a first participant and online review of the reconciliation by a second participant different from the first participant.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the first and second participants are remotely located from one another.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the enabling comprises generating and serving web pages that allow the first and second participants to view the reconciliation item and the general ledger data and the source data associated with the reconciliation item.

4. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the web pages are presented in different languages for the first and second participants.

5. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the web pages are configured to represent monetary values in multiple currencies.

6. One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform the method as recited in claim 1.

7. A method comprising:

facilitating creation and storage of a reconciliation profile that describes how a financial account is to be reconciled;

facilitating creation of a reconciliation document based on the reconciliation profile, the reconciliation document containing at least one reconciliation item to be reconciled;

enabling reconciliation of the reconciliation item;

enabling review of the reconciliation document after the reconciliation item has been reconciled; and

enabling audit of the reconciliation document.

8. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the reconciliation profile comprises information including a profile code to identify the reconciliation profile, a profile status, a legal entity associated with the financial account, a type of financial account, and a profile description.

9. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the reconciliation item includes an adjustment amount to balance a ledger amount with a source amount.

10. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the facilitating creation and storage of the reconciliation profile comprises generating and serving one or more web pages that allow a user to enter parameters that define the reconciliation profile and storing the parameters entered by the user.

11. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the reconciliation document comprises:

- an identity of the financial account;
- a ledger balance for the financial account;
- a source balance for a transaction impacting the financial account;
- source data to evidence the source balance; and
- one or more reconciliation items to reconcile the ledger balance and the source balance.

12. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the enabling reconciliation, review, and audit comprises supporting remote, online access to the reconciliation document.

13. One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform the method as recited in claim 7.

14. A method comprising:

forming a reconciliation document to reconcile a financial account, the reconciliation document containing ledger data, source data, and at least one reconciliation item to reconcile a balance discrepancy between the ledger data and the source data;

reconciling the reconciliation item in the reconciliation document; and

submitting the reconciliation document for review.

15. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the reconciliation item can be represented in multiple currencies.

16. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the forming comprises:

creating the reconciliation document from a reconciliation profile that defines how the financial account is to be reconciled;

collecting the ledger data and the source data; and

enabling a user to add one or more reconciliation items.

17. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the reconciling comprises adding an adjustment amount to remove the balance discrepancy and balance the ledger data and the source data.

18. One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform the method as recited in claim 14.

19. A method comprising:

receiving ledger data pertaining to a financial account, the ledger data exhibiting a ledger balance;

collecting source data pertaining to the financial account, the source data exhibiting a source balance that is different from the ledger balance;

creating a reconciliation item to reconcile the source balance with the ledger balance; and

forming a reconciliation document that associates the ledger data, the source data, and the reconciliation item.

20. A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the receiving comprises receiving the ledger data from a financial ledger database.

21. A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the collecting source data comprises recording information identifying a hardcopy document and a physical location in which the hardcopy document resides.

22. A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the collecting source data comprises inducting electronic images of source documents into a database.

23. A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the collecting source data comprises receiving an electronic file containing source documents from a remote client and storing the electronic file in a database.

24. A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the reconciliation item lists amounts that can be represented in multiple currencies.

25. A method as recited in claim 19, further comprising serving the reconciliation document to a reviewer for review.

26. One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform the method as recited in claim 19.

27. A system comprising:

one or more client devices; and

an account reconciliation hosting system to host the one or more client devices, the account reconciliation hosting system supporting online access to ledger data and source data and facilitating creation of reconciliation documents to document reconciliations made to balance the ledger data and the source data.

28. A system as recited in claim 27, wherein:

the account reconciliation hosting system serves web pages; and

the one or more client devices execute a browser program to present the web pages.

29. A system as recited in claim 27, wherein the account reconciliation hosting system comprises a source database to store the source data.

30. A system as recited in claim 29, further comprising a subsystem to produce images of source documents and store the images in the source database.

31. A system as recited in claim 27, wherein the account reconciliation hosting system comprises an application database to store the ledger data.

32. A system as recited in claim 27, wherein the account reconciliation hosting system comprises one or more application servers to execute an account reconciliation application, the account reconciliation application having a collection of server pages to generate pages used in the creation of the reconciliation documents and a collection of object classes to facilitate reconciliation and review of the reconciliation documents.

33. A hosting system for hosting one or more clients, comprising:

a source database to store source data pertaining to a financial account, the source data exhibiting a source balance;

an application database to store ledger data pertaining to the financial account, the ledger data exhibiting a ledger balance; and

an account reconciliation application executing at the application database to enable creation of reconciliation documents that associate the ledger data and the source data pertaining to the financial account and define reconciliation items to reconcile any differences between the source balance and the ledger balance.

34. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, wherein the source database comprises an image repository to store images of source documents.

35. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, wherein the source database comprises a directory to track identity and location of hardcopies of source documents.

36. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, wherein the application database stores the reconciliation documents.

37. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, wherein the application database stores multiple ledger data from multiple different ledgers.

38. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, wherein the account reconciliation application enables creation of reconciliation profiles that define how the financial account is to be reconciled, the reconciliation documents being based in part on corresponding reconciliation profiles.

39. A hosting system as recited in claim 38, wherein the application database stores the reconciliation profiles.

40. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, wherein the account reconciliation application comprises a collection of server pages to generate web pages used in the creation of the reconciliation documents and a collection of object classes to facilitate reconciliation and review of the reconciliation documents.

41. A hosting system as recited in claim 40, further comprising one or more web servers to serve the web pages to remote clients.

42. A hosting system as recited in claim 40, wherein the web pages present content written in different languages.

43. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, wherein the reconciliation documents can exhibit financial amounts in different currencies.

44. A hosting system as recited in claim 33, further comprising a reporting database system to generate reports pertaining to account reconciliation.

45. A computing system, comprising:

memory to store ledger data and source data;

one or more processing units coupled to the memory; and

an account reconciliation application stored in the memory and executable on the one or more processing units to facilitate financial account reconciliation between the ledger data and the source data, the account reconciliation application documenting reconciliation items used to reconcile balance differences between the ledger data and the source data.

46. A computing system as recited in claim 45, wherein the account reconciliation application comprises:

a set of data structures to organize information pertaining to the financial account;
and

a collection of server pages to generate web pages that can be served to remote client devices to enable users to perform the financial account reconciliation.

47. A computing system as recited in claim 46, wherein the account reconciliation application enforces a schema to ensure that entries made by the users comply with predefined criteria.

48. A computing system as recited in claim 45, wherein the account reconciliation application is further configured to facilitate review and audit of the reconciliation items.

49. Computer-readable media having computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform functions comprising:

- creating reconciliation profiles that define how a financial account is to be reconciled;

- storing ledger data for the financial account;

- retrieving source data involved in a transaction pertaining to the financial account;

- creating a reconciliation document based on a selected reconciliation profile, the reconciliation document identifying a ledger balance from the ledger data and a source balance based on the source data, wherein the ledger balance and source balance are not equal; and

- adding a reconciliation item to the reconciliation document to reconcile the ledger balance with the source balance.

50. Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further having computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform functions comprising splitting a reconciliation profile into multiple split profiles according to additional attributes used to define the financial account so that reconciliation can be performed for each split profile.

51. Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further having computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform functions comprising searching for at least one of reconciliation profiles or reconciliation documents.

52. Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further having computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform functions comprising listing the ledger balance and source balance in multiple currencies.

53. Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further having computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform functions comprising reconciling the reconciliation item by providing an adjustment amount to adjust one of the source balance or the ledger balance so that the source balance equals the ledger balance.

54. Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further having computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform functions comprising adding comments to the reconciliation document.

55. Computer-readable media as recited in claim 49, further having computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform functions comprising generating web pages to present the reconciliation profiles and the reconciliation document.

56. An application program stored on computer-readable media, comprising:

- a first object class to organize account reconciliations for reconciling financial accounts;

- a second object class to perform the account reconciliations;

- a third object class to review the account reconciliations; and

- a fourth object class to audit the account reconciliations.

57. An application program stored on computer-readable media as recited in claim 56, wherein the first object class comprises one or more search object classes to search for the account reconciliations based on selected criteria.

58. An application program stored on computer-readable media as recited in claim 56, wherein the second object class comprises:

- an ledger object class to obtain general a ledger balance;
- a source object class to obtain a source balance; and
- an add reconciliation item object class to add a reconciliation item to reconcile the ledger balance with the source balance.

59. A financial account reconciliation system, comprising:

- means for creating a reconciliation profile that defines how a financial account is to be reconciled;

- means for creating a reconciliation document based on the reconciliation profile, the reconciliation document identifying a ledger balance and a source balance, wherein the ledger balance and source balance are not equal; and

- means for reconciling the ledger balance with the source balance.

60. A financial account reconciliation system as recited in claim 59, wherein the reconciliation profile comprises:

- a profile code field to identify the reconciliation profile;

a legal entity field to identify a legal entity associated with the reconciliation profile;

an account type field to hold a type of business account to which the reconciliation profile pertains;

a profile description field to hold descriptive information used to describe the reconciliation profile;

a profile status field to indicate a present status of the reconciliation document; and

a list area to list at least one financial account included in the reconciliation document.

61. A financial account reconciliation system as recited in claim 59, wherein the reconciliation document comprises:

account information to identify a particular financial account;

a ledger balance for the financial account;

a source balance;

source data to evidence the source balance; and

one or more reconciliation items to reconcile the ledger balance and the source balance.

62. A financial account reconciliation system as recited in claim 59, wherein the means for creating the reconciliation profile comprises an application program to generate

one or more web pages that allow a user to enter information that defines the reconciliation profile.

63. A financial account reconciliation system as recited in claim 59, wherein the means for creating the reconciliation document comprises an application program to generate the reconciliation document from the reconciliation profile, to obtain the ledger balance, and to add source information evidencing the source balance.

64. A financial account reconciliation system as recited in claim 59, wherein the means for reconciling comprises an application program to add a reconciliation item to the reconciliation document, the reconciliation item having an adjustment amount to reconcile the ledger balance with the source balance.

65. A financial account reconciliation system as recited in claim 59, embodied as a computing system wherein the means for creating the reconciliation profile, the means for creating the reconciliation document, and the means for reconciling are implemented as computer executable instructions performed by the computing system.

66. An electronic reconciliation profile stored in computer-readable medium, the electronic reconciliation document, comprising:

a profile code field to identify the reconciliation profile;

a legal entity field to identify a legal entity associated with the reconciliation profile;

an account type field to hold a type of business account to which the reconciliation profile pertains;

a profile description field to hold descriptive information used to describe the reconciliation profile;

a profile status field to indicate a present status of the reconciliation document;
and

a list area to list at least one financial account included in the reconciliation document.

67. An electronic reconciliation document stored in computer-readable medium, the electronic reconciliation document, comprising:

account information to identify a particular financial account;

a ledger balance for the financial account;

a source balance;

source data to evidence the source balance; and

one or more reconciliation items to reconcile the ledger balance and the source balance.

68. An electronic reconciliation document stored in computer-readable medium as recited in claim 67, wherein the source data is accessible through a link.

69. An electronic reconciliation document stored in computer-readable medium as recited in claim 67, wherein the source data comprises digital images of source documentation.

70. An electronic reconciliation document stored in computer-readable medium as recited in claim 67, wherein individual reconciliation items comprise an adjustment amount to be added to one of the ledger balance or the source balance so that the ledger balance equals the source balance.

71. A user interface for an account reconciliation tool, comprising:
a first area to present information for a financial account; and
a second area that lists one or more reconciliation items to reconcile a difference between a ledger balance and a source balance in the financial account.

72. A user interface as recited in claim 71, wherein individual reconciliation items comprise an adjustment amount to be added to one of the ledger balance or the source balance to bring the ledger balance and the source balance into balance.

73. A user interface as recited in claim 71, further comprising a currency list area to identify a currency type and to show the difference in the currency type.

74. A user interface as recited in claim 73, wherein the currency list allows a user to navigate through different currency types.

75. A user interface for an account reconciliation tool, comprising:

- a search section to search for accounts to be reconciled;
- a first area to identify participants involved in reconciling the accounts and to provide access to reconciliations associated with the participants; and
- a second area to list any comments pertaining to particular account reconciliations.

76. A user interface as recited in claim 75, wherein the first area further includes progress metrics that indicate how much progress the participants have made toward completing the associated reconciliations.